



Department of Justice

United States Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas

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CONTACT: PAO DARYL FIELDS
(210) 384-7440

OVER 300 QUARTER HORSES ALLEGEDLY PART OF LOS ZETAS MONEY LAUNDERING OPERATION SOLD FOR APPROXIMATELY \$8.8 MILLION

Over 300 quarter horses seized by federal authorities in June as part of an alleged Los Zetas money laundering operation have been sold for approximately \$8.8 million announced United States Attorney Robert Pitman and Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Special Agent in Charge Steve McCollough.

Two-thirds of the horses were sold this weekend at Heritage Place Auction Facility in Oklahoma City, OK, including *A Dash of Sweet Heat*, which sold for \$1 million. Approximately 100 broodmares were sold prior to auction for \$35,000. The federal government still retains possession of approximately 45 quarter horses, including Tempting Dash, winner of the Dash for Cash at Lone Star Park race track in Grand Prairie, Texas, on October 24, 2009; Mr. Piloto, \$1 million All American Futurity winner at Ruidoso Downs on Labor Day, 2010; Dashin Follies; Separate Fire; and Y516, a yearling seized on Zule Farms in Lexington, OK. Those horses are expected to be auctioned or sold at a later date.

United States Attorney Robert Pitman noted that while the individual defendants in this case will face criminal trial in the spring, the proceeds from the sale of these quarter horses will be held in escrow pending a forfeiture action. Court documents allege that the horses were bought by and for members of the Los Zetas drug cartel with proceeds from narcotics trafficking.

"Like all criminal organizations, the Zetas are motivated by money. Identifying and taking their assets is an important way to lay an axe to the root of the tree. If successful, the forfeiture of these assets will represent a major step in our efforts to interrupt the cartel's activity within in the United States," stated United States Attorney Pitman.

"This investigation has helped to disrupt this alleged international drug cartel's U.S.-based money laundering operations and demonstrates the lengths that US law enforcement will go to deprive criminal organizations of the fruits of their illegal activities," stated IRS-CI Special Agent in Charge Steve McCullough.

The sale of the horses is being made as a result of a court order in U.S. v. Miguel Angel Trevino Morales, et al. (WDTX case number A12cr210) and in accordance with industry practices.

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